

The background of the cover features a silhouette of a soldier in a trench, looking out over a landscape. The sky is a warm, orange-red color, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The soldier is positioned on the right side of the frame, with a vertical post and a horizontal wire in front of him. The overall mood is somber and reflective.

BY DR. HARRY ELMER BARNES

# Who Started World War One?

An unbiased analysis of the causes  
and mitigating factors of World War One  
from the father of historical Revisionism

PUBLISHED BY THE BARNES REVIEW

# Who Started World War One?

By HARRY ELMER BARNES

Published August 2009: 2,000 copies

Reprinted November 2010: 2,000 copies

Portions of this book may be reproduced  
in reviews of the book or portions quoted  
in informational articles as long as author, title,  
publisher and publisher's address are cited.

PUBLISHED BY  
THE BARNES REVIEW  
P.O. Box 15877  
Washington, D.C. 20003

**To subscribe to TBR magazine:**

U.S.A. domestic: \$46 for one year—six issues.

Canada/Mexico: \$65 per year.

All other nations: \$80 per year—sent via air mail.

Free S&H inside the U.S. Outside the U.S. email [TBRca@aol.com](mailto:TBRca@aol.com).

Use major credit cards.

**To order *Who Started World War One?***

(Softcover, 60 pages, #530, \$6.) Available from TBR BOOK CLUB, P.O. Box 15877, Washington, D.C. 20003. Call 1-877-773-9077 toll free to charge to Visa, MasterCard, AmEx or Discover. See more great books and videos online at [www.barnesreview.com](http://www.barnesreview.com).

## PREFACE

# Wars & the Decline of the West

**T**his pioneering Revisionist work by the doyen of Revisionism, Harry Elmer Barnes, ends with the entrance of the U.S.A. into World War I. Thus, the final gruesome tally of the horrible and unnecessary costs of that war in terms of blood, treasure, and political disaster could not be included. Today, we can count a total of 16,543,185 deaths of all participants, 9,721,937 military and 6,821,248 civilian, most of them white, from WWI. The military deaths are mostly young men, Europe's finest, who left behind no progeny, and the civilian count includes children (boys and girls), who never had a chance to raise a family.

In other words, WWI was dysgenic in the extreme for whites.

Prof. Barnes's work, of course, has nothing to say about what we now call World War II. *The World Almanac's* figures for that war are as follows: in combat, 416,800 Americans killed, 8 million "Europeans" killed, and 11 million "Russians" killed. The Communists murdered 40-60 million in Russia. Historians estimate that WWII caused the deaths (some indirectly) of about 76 million—including 5,500,000 German men, women and children.

Although in World War II non-whites figure heavily in the casualty figures, the best estimate is that 62 million whites were killed and some 230 million injured, many of them horribly, with no chance to have children.

Let us now ask what was the return in exchange for this huge loss of life?

The answer must be, absolutely nothing positive. If victory in war is defined as aggrandizing the territory, prosperity, security, or well-being of the victorious power, the terrifying answer has to be: nothing. All of the important results were negative. No gains whatsoever accrued to the white race as a whole.

Oh no, some might object. How about the undoubted gains in science, technology and communications? All these aspects of white civilization and progress gained greatly from the government-sponsored expenditures during the war for research, including the fields of disease prevention and curative drugs and medical procedures. Nuclear power is a product of wartime research and development, as is space travel.

Certainly, wartime expenditures improved technology in many areas. But



are these so-called advances really meaningful in terms of our quality of life and the future?

This writer doubts that unleashing the power of the atom is a true advance, nor is prolonging lives of terminally ill patients a true social gain.

We come to the economic problem. The debts that were run up by the United States to mobilize and fight WWI and WWII not only will never be repaid but have saddled our country with a government run completely by money lenders and their proxies. The interest on these debts is bankrupting America. Today, a burdensome portion of the annual national budget goes to pay interest on these loans. The loans will remain and will outlive the United States at this rate. But what President Obama's mad spending makes certain is that inflation and national bankruptcy are ahead. How many months remain before the dollar completely collapses and a Weimar-style inflation sets in?

Even more sobering is the fatal phenomenon of white flight from the control and guidance of the very civilization and culture they have created. Besotted by overpowering propaganda and the force of law, today we witness the most amazing spectacle of racial suicide. Today, too many whites are either firmly committed to the doctrine of racial equality or are too intimidated to speak out. In most nations of Europe, Canada and Australia—the very historical founts of a once-proud white culture—it is illegal to even speak out in the favor of the white race; all whites are expected—under pain of punishment—to join the official “politically correct” program of elevating non-whites to authority over themselves.

In the United States, thanks to our Constitution, it is not technically illegal to say virtually anything that comes to mind. One may curse God and Christ, promote vile and obscene speech and pornography, advocate homosexuality, incest, bestiality or suicide, but if you advocate racial separatism or believe in white rights or deny the holocaust, you bear the mark of Cain.

Whites are expected by the media, by academe, by church and civic leaders to never utter a word that could be interpreted as being pro-white. On the contrary, every public utterance of whites where there is even a remote connection with race must be pro-Negro, pro-Asian or pro-Hispanic and, above all, pro-Jewish.

Is there hope at all? Ah, yes. We know that history proves only one thing: change is certain. Even the “sure things” go wrong; watch for the “black swan.” Predict events at your peril. Something will come along.

—W.A. CARTO



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

# Who Started World War One?

CHAPTER I: THE SERBIAN PLOT .....	PAGE 1
CHAPTER II: FRANCE & RUSSIA PREPARE FOR WAR .....	PAGE 5
CHAPTER III: AUSTRIA PLANS TO ACT AGAINST SERBIA .....	PAGE 9
CHAPTER IV: RUSSIA MOVES FOR WAR .....	PAGE 13
CHAPTER V: FRANCE ENCOURAGES RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION .....	PAGE 17
CHAPTER VI: GERMANY ENDEAVORS TO PRESERVE PEACE .....	PAGE 21
CHAPTER VII: ENGLAND REFUSES TO RESTRAIN FRANCE & RUSSIA .....	PAGE 25
CHAPTER VIII: ITALY & BELGIUM .....	PAGE 33
CHAPTER IX: CONCLUSION .....	PAGE 35
CHAPTER X: HOW THE UNITED STATES BECAME INVOLVED .....	PAGE 39



ARCHDUKE FRANZ FERDINAND



# The Serbian Plot

A relevant discussion of the immediate outbreak of the World War I must begin with a consideration of the anti-Austrian movement in Serbia and its culmination in the murder of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand on June 28, 1914. The nationalistic movement in Serbia had been strong for more than a generation, and had been notably forwarded by what the Serbs regarded as the aggressive and utterly unjustifiable annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria in 1908. Serbian officials did not know that this annexation had actually been suggested by Serbia's supposed protector, Russia. Throughout the period from 1912 to 1914 Austria, in large part in self-defense against the Russo-Balkan intrigues led by Izvolski, Hartwig and Pashitch, became more active and aggressive in regard to the Balkans, and during the Balkan crises of 1912-14 assumed a threatening attitude toward Serbia. The patriotic and unification movements in the Serbian state were therefore enormously stimulated from a defensive point of view. In her aggression toward Serbia at this time, Austria had acted without the instigation or encouragement of Germany. In fact, Germany was influenced by Baron von Griesinger, the pro-Serbian German minister in Belgrade, and had on two occasions moved to restrain Austria.

It should be pointed out, however, that about this time Germany had secured what seemed to be a very thorough-going control over Turkish foreign policy, and was bringing to completion her negotiations and activities in regard to the Baghdad Railroad. Hence Germany was not likely to view with equanimity any increase of Russian activity in the Balkans, to say nothing of the Russian desire to obtain control of Constantinople and the straits. Likewise, Sazonov was greatly alarmed at the growth of German influence over the Sublime Porte. He was particularly irritated when, in 1913, Liman von Sanders, a German general, was invited to reorganize and drill the Turkish army, though a British admiral was already in charge of the Turkish navy. By December 8, 1913, Sazonov informed the czar that Russia must control the straits, but probably could do so only at the expense of war.

The antagonism between Austria and Serbia tended to become acute in the spring of 1914, and a notorious Serbian plotter and assassin, Col. Dragutin

# The Serbian Plot

A relevant discussion of the immediate outbreak of the World War I must begin with a consideration of the anti-Austrian movement in Serbia and its culmination in the murder of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand on June 28, 1914. The nationalistic movement in Serbia had been strong for more than a generation, and had been notably forwarded by what the Serbs regarded as the aggressive and utterly unjustifiable annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria in 1908. Serbian officials did not know that this annexation had actually been suggested by Serbia's supposed protector, Russia. Throughout the period from 1912 to 1914 Austria, in large part in self-defense against the Russo-Balkan intrigues led by Izvolski, Hartwig and Pashitch, became more active and aggressive in regard to the Balkans, and during the Balkan crises of 1912-14 assumed a threatening attitude toward Serbia. The patriotic and unification movements in the Serbian state were therefore enormously stimulated from a defensive point of view. In her aggression toward Serbia at this time, Austria had acted without the instigation or encouragement of Germany. In fact, Germany was influenced by Baron von Griesinger, the pro-Serbian German minister in Belgrade, and had on two occasions moved to restrain Austria.

It should be pointed out, however, that about this time Germany had secured what seemed to be a very thorough-going control over Turkish foreign policy, and was bringing to completion her negotiations and activities in regard to the Baghdad Railroad. Hence Germany was not likely to view with equanimity any increase of Russian activity in the Balkans, to say nothing of the Russian desire to obtain control of Constantinople and the straits. Likewise, Sazonov was greatly alarmed at the growth of German influence over the Sublime Porte. He was particularly irritated when, in 1913, Liman von Sanders, a German general, was invited to reorganize and drill the Turkish army, though a British admiral was already in charge of the Turkish navy. By December 8, 1913, Sazonov informed the czar that Russia must control the straits, but probably could do so only at the expense of war.

The antagonism between Austria and Serbia tended to become acute in the spring of 1914, and a notorious Serbian plotter and assassin, Col. Dragutin



Dimitrievitch, laid the plot to murder the heir apparent to the Austrian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, while the latter was attending the Austrian army maneuvers in Bosnia late in June 1914. A number of courageous young Bosnian patriots were enlisted in the plot, trained in pistol marksmanship and the throwing of bombs by Serbian military authorities at Belgrade and then sent, with the connivance of the Serbian authorities, to Sarajevo in Bosnia, where they awaited the impending visit of the archduke.

When this information concerning the complicity of Dimitrievitch was first made public by a Serbian historian, Stanojevic, in 1923, it was believed that, while the Serbian military authorities may have been cognizant of the plot, the Serbian civil government was innocent of this knowledge. But the exuberance of the tenth anniversary of the outbreak of the world war has proved too much for the discretion of certain Serbian officials and Ljuba Yovanovitch, a member of the Serbian cabinet in 1914, has exultantly boasted that the Serbian civil government was likewise in full possession of the facts regarding the plot a month before the assassination was consummated. There is some evidence that the Serbian minister to Vienna in 1914 passed a hint of the impending assassination to Bilinski, who was at that time minister of finance and administration in Bosnia, but Bilinski, who was out of favor at the Austrian court, apparently never handed on this warning if he actually received it. In fact, it was no warning at all, being only the suggestion that at the maneuvers in Bosnia a soldier might substitute a real cartridge for a blank cartridge and fire in the direction of Franz Ferdinand.

The Serbian government, hoping that the secret in regard to the collusion of the Serbian military and civil authorities in the plot for the assassination of the archduke might die with its author, attempted during the war to secure the assassination of Dimitrievitch, and, failing in this, was able in 1917 to execute him on a trumped-up charge of treason. These latter facts have been frankly revealed by the records of the Saloniki Trial of 1917, which have been analyzed by Dr. Bogitschevitch. In the light of the fact that we now know that the Serbian premier, Nikola Pashitch, was aware of the assassination plot at least three weeks before the murder of June 28, it is illuminating to remember his ardent and repeated insistence upon his complete ignorance of the plot in July 1914. Austria entertained at the time of the assassination the strong conviction of the direct participation of the Serbian government in this plot, and acted on this supposition, though as an actual matter of fact the Austrian committee of investigation was unable, in July 1914, to find any convincing evidence supporting this contention, beyond such general, but significant considerations, as the origin of the plot in Belgrade, the training of the assassins in Serbia, the Serbian

collusion in the trip of the assassins to Bosnia and the exuberant attitude of the Serbian press and patriotic societies in regard to the assassination and the assassins. They possessed, moreover, a large number of decoded telegrams describing Russian intrigues in Serbia and the Balkans.





CZAR NICHOLAS II

# France & Russia Prepare for War

**T**he assassination of the archduke on June 28, 1914 shocked and startled the various European chancelleries. The tension had been high in the international situation in the spring of 1914, and the murder of the Austrian heir was recognized by most foreign offices as likely to create a serious crisis in diplomatic affairs. In general, there was a fairly common feeling throughout Europe that the assassination had been an atrocious affair, and that Austria would be justified in taking rather a severe attitude toward Serbia.

Poincare and Izvolski, though they probably did not know of the actual details of the plot to assassinate the archduke, recognized at once the significance of the episode for the policy which they had been planning during the previous two or three years. In January 1914, Poincare had arranged for a visit to Russia during the following July, and this trip was executed as planned, though it was to involve a discussion of far more momentous and immediate issues than had earlier been contemplated. Many of the ultra-severe critics of Poincare have alleged that this trip was planned solely to encourage the aspiring but cowardly and hesitant Russian militarists. It is definitely known, however, that the trip had been fully provided for a considerable time before the assassination. This fact does not, however, in any way affect the thesis that Poincare exploited the visit primarily for the purpose of stiffening the Russian determination to prevent any strong Austrian action in the Serbian crisis, and that he hoped to use the Balkan controversy as the basis for humiliating Germany and Austria or for precipitating the world war, which would lead to the Russian seizure of the straits and the French recovery of Alsace-Lorraine.

We know upon authentic information that Poincare was most enthusiastically welcomed at St. Petersburg, that he did everything possible to strengthen practically and symbolically the Franco-Russian alliance, and that he urged the Russians to be firm in their attitude toward the Serbian situation. He also



assumed a somewhat menacing attitude toward the Austrian ambassador to St. Petersburg. Poincare's visit to St. Petersburg took place before either he or the Russians had any complete knowledge of the specific nature of the impending Austrian ultimatum to Serbia. Yet the long postponement of a definite statement of the presumably punitive action in regard to Serbia had aroused the suspicion of both the French and the Russians that something ominous was imminent. It is very significant that, at this early date, Poincare gave Russia a free hand to act in the Serbian crisis, and promised full French aid in any event—before either he or Sazonov knew the specific terms of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia. Izvolski was then also in St. Petersburg to aid in the deliberations.

The Kaiser has been frequently, and not unjustly, condemned for giving Austria a blank check in regard to Serbia. But it should be indicated in frankness and candor that this was exactly what Poincare did during his St. Petersburg visit with respect to the Russian attitude and policy in regard to Austria. Moreover, the British documents show us that on July 22 Poincare also blocked Grey's first plan for peace, namely, direct conversations between Vienna and St. Petersburg. Primarily as a result of Poincare's visit, the Russian militarists thoroughly gained the upper hand over the pacific party at the court. General Russian preparations for the war began on July 24, and we may most certainly accept as accurate the conclusion of the scholarly Frenchman, Alfred Fabre-Luce, to the effect that after Poincare's visit to St. Petersburg there was only a very slight chance that the European war could be averted.

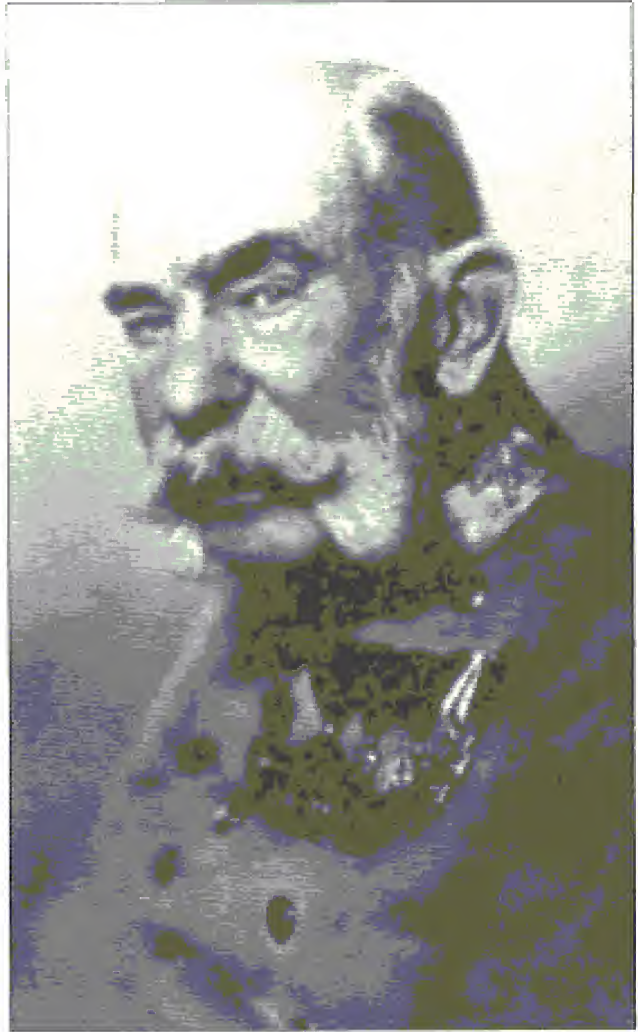
Another very important result of the St. Petersburg visit was the conversion of René Viviani from a conciliatory attitude to one of firm bellicosity, equal to that of Poincare himself. Baron Schoen, during the summer of 1927, explained to the present writer at length the effect of the trip to St. Petersburg upon Viviani. The combined effect of consultation with the Russians and two weeks conversation in isolation with Poincare completely changed the character of Viviani in regard to diplomatic conciliation and Franco-German relations. Before going to St. Petersburg he had been highly conciliatory and had cooperated in friendly fashion with Baron Schoen in regard to all proposals to better Franco-German relations. After he returned to Paris he exhibited but the most formal politeness in his contact with Schoen over the issue of French neutrality and an understanding with Germany. In this manner the St. Petersburg visit transformed the only prominent official in the French cabinet who might have tried to avert war.

It was generally contended by the Entente propagandists during the World War that 1914 was a particularly fortunate date for such a conflict from the standpoint of the Central Powers, and an especially unfortunate one from

the point of view of the Entente. Exactly the opposite was the case. There was no specific reason why Germany and Austria should have considered 1914 advantageous for a European conflict, and only the nebulous general one that the longer the conflict was delayed, the greater would become the disproportionate military strength of Russia and France. It is true that the murder of the archduke made it necessary for Austria to move decisively against Serbia at once, but the Serbian crisis could have best been handled by Austria without a general European war. It must be remembered that all of Austria's plans for the Balkans and most of Germany's foreign policies were likely to be damaged or wrecked by a European war.

On the other hand, 1914 was a crucially important date for a European war from the standpoint of the interests of Russia and France. Without the British navy, Russia and France would have been gravely handicapped in a war against Germany and Austria. In June, 1914, England and Germany had settled in a satisfactory manner their outstanding difficulties in international relations, particularly their disputes over Mesopotamia and the Baghdad Railroad, and were getting on better terms than during any other period in the previous 18 years. Hence, in another year it would be highly doubtful if Great Britain could be induced to undertake warlike action on behalf of France and Russia. In the same way that this Anglo-German rapprochement created a greater necessity for war in 1914 on the part of Dual Alliance, so it decreased the occasion for any German war against Great Britain at this moment. It is true that the Russian military increases would not have been perfected before 1917, but the prospect of losing England was far more serious a matter than incomplete military preparations. Russia was well prepared for a short war in 1914, and a short war was expected if England came to the aid of France and Russia.





EMPEROR FRANZ JOSEF OF AUSTRIA



# Austria Plans To Act Against Serbia

**T**he Austro-Hungarian court and military circles had for some years before 1914 become alarmed at the Serbian nationalist agitation and its encouragement by the Russians. It seemed to them the most menacing movement then directed against the integrity of the Dual Monarchy. If successful, it would lead to the immediate loss of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and would constitute an invitation to revolution and secession on the part of the other minority nationalities within the polyglot empire. Up to the time of the assassination of the archduke, active Austrian intervention in Serbian affairs had been prevented by the opposition of the moderates in the Austrian-Hungarian ministry, particularly Count Tisza, the Hungarian premier, by the adverse attitude of Germany toward any open aggression against Serbia and by Italian coolness with respect to severe disciplining of Serbia. The assassination of the archduke brought the matter to a crisis by enormously strengthening the activity and determination of the interventionists, and helping to silence or weaken the opposition to such a policy. The Vienna authorities, civil and military, quickly came to the decision that the Serbian crisis could no longer be ignored, and Count Tisza was soon won over to the policy of forcible intervention.

The attitude of Germany in the crisis had, of course, to be ascertained by the Austrians, and on July 5th a letter from Franz Josef was delivered to the Kaiser, setting forth the Austrian grievances against Serbia and stressing the fact that the Austrian Empire could not be kept intact without immediate and vigorous action against this south Slavic state. The Kaiser, who had earlier been frequently accused by Austria-Hungarian ministers of special partiality and friendliness toward Serbia, was now alarmed about the future of Austria-Hungary, with which the destinies of the German Empire were so closely linked. He was also personally shocked and doubtless somewhat

frightened by the assassination of the archduke, with whom he was personally friendly, and whose dynastic fortunes were so closely linked to the House of Hohenzollern. Consequently, after consultation with his chancellor and the Foreign Office, the Kaiser made the following momentous decision on July 5th: "Austria may judge what is to be done to clear up her relation with Serbia; whatever Austria's decision may turn out to be, Austria can count with certainty upon it that Germany will stand behind her as an ally and a friend." The Kaiser recognized at the time the possibility that this decision might lead to a European war, but he believed it highly improbable, because he felt that the czar, like himself, would be so shocked at the assassination of Franz Ferdinand as to eliminate any considerable probability of Russian opposition to the proper punishment of Serbia. And, in any event, he believed Russia insufficiently prepared. Moreover, the Kaiser staked too much on English neutrality, and believed that France and Russia would not move without British aid.

During the latter part of the World War there developed a notorious myth concerning an alleged "Potsdam Conference," said to have been held on July 5, 1914, at which the Kaiser was claimed to have met the leading German and Austrian officials, as well as prominent members of the financial and industrial world in the Central Empires, to have revealed to them his determination to precipitate a general European war, and to have warned them that they would have only about three weeks to prepare for its outbreak. We now know that there is not the slightest shred of evidence to support this notorious fabrication, which was published throughout the Allied world by Henry Morgenthau, who was during the war the American minister at Constantinople. There was no such conference whatever; the Kaiser at that time had only the slightest anticipation that a European war was to come, and was distinctly opposed to any general European war over the Serbian issue. He and his chancellor can, however, be accused of indiscretion in giving Austria this blank check without the ability to keep themselves informed of Austrian policies. But they repented of this folly later, and would unquestionably have made satisfactory amends for it had not the premature Russian mobilization frustrated the really earnest German efforts to restrain an Austrian attack on Serbia when the latter seemed likely to bring on a general European conflict. The Austrian diplomats of 1914 have freely admitted that they formulated their policies in regard to Serbia independently and were in no sense "incited" by Germany. There is no evidence, on the other hand, that Poincare ever repented of his grant of a free hand to Russia or made any effort to curb Russian aggression.



The Austrians delayed the sending of their ultimatum to Serbia until July 23rd. This was once believed to be due to the fact that it had been decided at the "Potsdam Conference" on July 5th that several weeks would be required to put the Central Empires into shape for a continental war. We now know that the delay was due to the necessity of converting Count Tisza to the war policy, the desire to postpone the ultimatum until Poincare had left Russia, and the effort to secure proof of official Serbian complicity in the assassination as a result of a study of the facts by an Austrian committee of investigation. This investigating commission, headed by Dr. von Wiesner, was unable to find complete evidence of that full responsibility of Serbia which has been subsequently so thoroughly established. But the general attitude of the Serbian press, and other symptoms, only demonstrated still further the already well-known fact that the Serbian state was thoroughly behind the nationalistic and patriotic movements which had produced the assassination. The Austrian government resolved that this time they would thoroughly dispose of the Serbian nuisance, whatever the consequences.

In spite of the fact that even the German officials regarded the Serbian reply to the Austrian ultimatum as quite satisfactory, Austria declared war on Serbia on July 28th. That the Serbians, encouraged by the Russian attitude, were as stubborn and recalcitrant as the Austrians is proved by the fact that the Serbian army was ordered mobilized some three hours before the Serbian reply to the ultimatum had been sent to the Austrian officials. There can be no doubt that the Austrians were determined upon a punitive expedition into Serbia, if Serbia did not accept the ultimatum in full, or that Germany was quite willing to see this policy carried out, provided it did not bring with it the strong probability of a general European war. The German civil government distinctly wanted the conflict localized, and limited to a punishment of Serbia. This is in sharp contrast with the policy of Poincare and the Russians, which was clearly based upon the desire to bring about a general European war, without which the Franco-Russian ambitions could not have been in any way satisfied. This distinction between the type of war contemplated by Austria and that envisaged by France and Russia is of the utmost importance in assessing the relative responsibility of these various powers for the general cataclysm that had sprung into full being by the close of the first week in August, 1914. Further, as Dr. Gooch has admitted, Austria was acting in self-defense, while Russia was motivated by a lust for prestige and national gain.

While every friend of peace might well wish that Austria had accepted the terms of the Serbian reply to her ultimatum, no American can with any propriety criticize her for not doing so. Serbia rejected points 5 and 6, the real



case of the ultimatum. In 1898 Spain made a far more complete surrender to the terms of our ultimatum than did Serbia to the Austrian demands. Yet President McKinley kept the Spanish reply secret and urged war upon Congress. Certainly no one could contend that our interests in Cuba in 1898 were in any way as urgent or direct as those of Austria in the Serbian crisis of 1914. But a better analogy can be found by asking what the United States would have done if, about July 4, 1901, Mr. Roosevelt and his wife had been assassinated at El Paso, Texas, by Americans of Mexican blood who were members of a notorious Mexican secret society given over to plotting against the United States and whose murder of Mr. Roosevelt had been immediately proclaimed in the Mexican papers as a noble and laudable patriotic act. It is to be hoped that there is no reader naive enough to suspect that we would even have waited for any diplomatic exchanges whatever before racing our soldiers into Mexico!

# Russia Moves for War

**T**he action of Russia following the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia was prompt and decisive. The Russian militarists, after the impetus and advantage they had gained from Poincaré's visit and encouragement, were in full command of the situation at St. Petersburg, and they had a most enthusiastic and aggressive aide at the French capital in Izvolski, who, in these crucial days, presided over the negotiations between St. Petersburg and Paris. The Austrian ultimatum to Serbia seemed likely to present an admirable occasion for the precipitation of that world war which the ministerial councils had foreseen and longed for in the previous December and February. The Russian military preparations for a European war had been in process of active development for more than a year previous. They had been still further increased following February 1914, and real activity had been initiated as soon as the news of the assassination of the archduke reached St. Petersburg. When the court and military circles were informed of the terms of the Austrian ultimatum, military preparations on a large scale began in dead earnest. Widespread preparatory military measures were ordered on the 24th of July, the day that Russia learned the nature of the Austrian ultimatum. When Sazonov read the ultimatum on the 24th, he exclaimed "This is the European war!" When Izvolski left St. Petersburg in the evening of July 25th, he and Paleologue agreed that a European war was inevitable. General Dobrorolski has confessed that war was decided on by the night of the 25th and all Russian diplomacy in 1914 was a sham gesture to obscure the military preparations. This procedure had been decided upon in November 1912. A partial mobilization was ordered on the 29th, and general mobilization on the 30th. All of this came before there had been any evidence of German military activity anticipating a world war.

It has been contended that the Russian general mobilization was not precipitate, and that Russia had to mobilize at once to save Serbia from imminent destruction at the hands of the Austrian army. This is nonsense. The Russians knew in 1914 that the Austrian military plans involved an indirect campaign against Serbia which would make it impossible to invade Serbia until more than



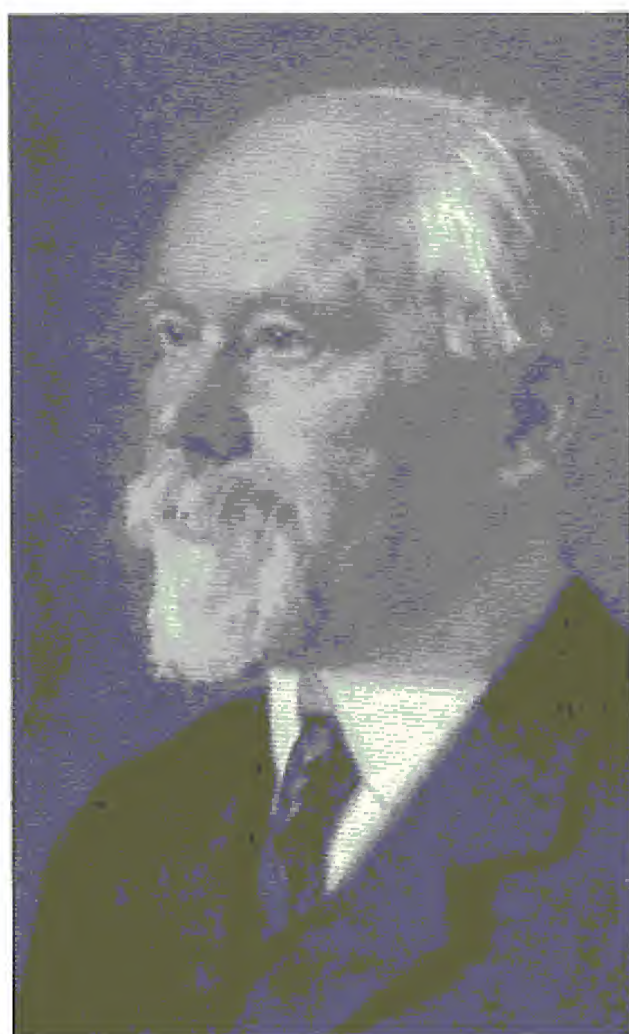
two weeks after the Austrian declaration of war against Serbia. There was, therefore, plenty of time for Russia to mobilize after diplomacy had failed.

As it had been frankly admitted and assumed by French, Russian and English military authorities for a generation that a general Russian mobilization would inevitably mean a European war, there can be no question that the Russian militarists were as determined to bring about a general European conflict as was Austria to invade Serbia unless Serbia capitulated. The czar was certainly in favor of peace, and when the Kaiser telegraphed him, on the 29th, protesting against the impending Russian general mobilization, he ordered it suspended, but the next day the militarists won over the weak-minded and bewildered monarch to the final and fatal decision upon general mobilization. He was unquestionably a well-intentioned and pacifically inclined ruler, but unintelligent, vacillating and confused before the impending calamity. The Grand Duke Nicholas and the strongest elements in the court group were extremely enthusiastic for war, as were the military circles, though there seems some probability that the minister of war, Sukhomlinov, lost his nerve in the face of the crisis. It was for a considerable time believed by scholars that the Russian Foreign Minister, Sazonov, was really in favor of mediation, and was brought around to the war view only by full realization of the menace of this policy to the Russian ambitions in the Near East. More thorough investigation, and particularly the marshalling of the evidence in the recent book by Major Frantz, has unquestionably established the fact that Sazonov had, by the time of Poincaré's departure from St. Petersburg, become thoroughly converted to the aggressive attitude and, throughout the crucial period of the last two weeks in July, was aligned with the military party in the Russian capital. As Professor William L. Langer expresses it in the final authoritative judgement of Russian responsibility for the war: "Sazonov whole-heartedly supported the military men in the demand for general mobilization . . . Sazonov did nothing to avert the catastrophe, but backed the Serbs to the limit and allowed things to take their course." It need not be further emphasized at this point that among all the prominent Russians of the time the zeal of Izvolski, now back from Paris, for a European war was matched only by that of the Grand Duke Nicholas at home.

All of the above might be true, and yet Russia might stand vindicated if it could be shown that she was determined upon war in a legitimate cause. The excuse set forth by Russia in 1914 was the allegation that Russia was traditionally and morally bound to protect all the Slavic peoples of Europe. In the light of the fact that it had been the Russian Foreign Minister, Izvolski, who had suggested the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908, and that Russia had offered Turkey an alliance against the Slavic Balkan states in 1911, it can



scarcely be held that Russia's title to act as protector of the Serbs can command much respect. On this issue we might offer the opinion of the decidedly anti-German British ambassador to France in 1914, Sir Francis Bertie. Writing in his diary on July 26th, 1914 Bertie said: "Russia comes forward as the protectress of Serbia; by what title except on the exploded pretensions that she is, by right, the protectress of all Slavs? What rubbish!" On July 27th he wrote to Sir Edward Grey: "The French government . . . should be encouraged to put pressure on the Russian government not to assume the absurd and obsolete attitude of Russia being the protectress of all Slav states whatever their conduct, for this will lead to war." Bertie also pointed out to Grey on the 25th that even Bienvenu-Martin, the French acting-minister for foreign affairs, admitted that the Russian protection of Serbia was no adequate ground for French intervention: "I [Bertie] felt sure that public opinion in England would not sanction a war in support of Russia if she, as protector of Slavs, picked a quarrel with Austria over Austro-Serbian difficulty. He [Bienvenu-Martin] admitted, but not as minister, that it would be difficult to bring French public opinion to fighting point in such a case as present one."



RAYMOND POINCARÉ

# France Encourages Russian Mobilization

**I**nasmuch as Poincaré had probably been the chief factor and influence in leading the Russians to determine upon an immediate and actively aggressive policy in July 1914, it was scarcely to be expected that France would vigorously oppose the Russian preparatory and mobilization measures, even though French authorities knew that, once they were started in real earnest, there was absolutely no possibility of preventing a general European war. Poincaré returned from St. Petersburg fully convinced that war was inevitable. We now have most of the dispatches exchanged between the French government and the Russian government at St. Petersburg on the subject of the military measures. There is not a single telegram in this collection which reveals any French effort whatever to restrain the Russian military activity. Viviani's telegram on the morning of July 30th only cautioned against allowing the Germans to become aware of Russian mobilization and to start counter-mobilization. In fact, the most important telegram was one sent by Izvolski on July 30th, stating that the French Minister of War had suggested that the Russians might well speed up their military preparations, but should be as secretive about this activity as possible, so that more time might be gained upon Germany and no open incitement or excuse be given to the Germans for mobilization on their part. In a number of important telegrams Izvolski described to his home government the high enthusiasm of the French government and military circles with respect to the impending war. About 1 a.m. the morning of August 1st Izvolski telegraphed home that the French ministry had revealed to him their great exuberance and enthusiasm over the final decision for war, and asked him to request the Russian government to direct their military activities against Germany rather than Austria. And at this same time Izvolski was joyously and enthusiastically admitting his part by openly boasting: "*C'est ma guerre.*"



During the war the French persistently called attention to a certain phase of their prewar military activity as a definite proof of their pacific intent. This was the famous French order of July 30th, directing the withdrawal of the frontier troops in certain sections to a line about six miles back of the boundary. As the French patrols were left at the border posts, so that they could detect any aggressive advances on the part of the Germans, who in fact had not yet mobilized at all, this movement of troops did not in any way whatever reduce the military efficiency of the French defenses against German invasion. The patrols were in a position to report any advance movement of German troops, and the French armies could have been marched over the intervening six miles in an hour. As an actual matter of fact, this withdrawal was a positive aid to French military preparations, as they carried on extensive preparatory activities back of the screen of the six-mile line. We now know that the whole thing was primarily a picturesque gesture to aid Sir Edward Grey and the "strong" members of the English Cabinet in duping the English Parliament and people by convincing them of the pacific and defensive attitude of France. It is explicitly stated in the new British documents that the withdrawal was undertaken to influence British opinion. The French authorities recognized clearly, as their dispatches of the time indicate, that if the English people had any serious suspicions of aggressive Franco-Russian action, there would be great difficulty in getting the English nation enthusiastically into the war on the side of France and Russia, and it might even have been difficult to get the English Cabinet to decide upon war. It is also necessary to remember that the withdrawal gesture was further designed to produce a favorable opinion of French official action in the minds of the French and Italian people, in order that the French might rally loyally and the Italians refuse to join Austria and Germany. There is, thus, no substantial evidence that the group in charge of French policy in July, 1914, took any significant steps whatever to avert the great catastrophe, and there is an overwhelming body of proof to support the position that they did everything possible to make the war inevitable.

Another famous scheme of Poincaré to make war both certain and relatively safe for the Entente was his appeal, first to Lord Bertie and then directly to George V, to have England declare her unconditional solidarity with France and Russia, on the ground that this would frighten Germany out of her aggressive plans and preserve peace. He further told the king that France had from the beginning put pressure on Russia for moderation and that Russia had at all stages honored such advice. The direct opposite is, of course, true, namely, that from the first, France had encouraged Russian aggressiveness, and that on the 27th Sazonov had warned both France and England that Russia would tolerate

no suggestions of moderation. Moreover, it was Russia which needed restraint at this time if peace was to be preserved. Lord Bertie penetrated this sham with great clarity and precision. In a telegram to Grey on July 30th, he said: "The French instead of putting pressure on the Russian government to moderate their zeal expect us to give the Germans to understand that we mean fighting if war breaks out. If we gave an assurance of armed assistance to France and Russia now, Russia would become more exacting and France would follow in her wake."

The French authorities would probably have encountered great difficulty in carrying through this war policy if they had gone through the usual constitutional process of putting up the matter of the declaration of war to the Chamber of Deputies, but this Poincare and his associates carefully avoided. The president and the ministry determined arbitrarily upon war, and, after its declaration, endeavored with success to justify their acts to the chamber. It needs to be pointed out here that France went beyond the terms of the Franco-Russian military convention. This promised French aid only in the event of a prior Austrian or German general mobilization against Russia, whereas, in 1914, Russia had ordered full mobilization before either Germany or Austria had ordered mobilization against Russia. France was not technically obligated to aid Russia under the terms of the military convention; what bound her was Poincare's blank check given during his visit to St. Petersburg. This fact probably made Poincare all the more loath to put the matter of the declaration of war before the Chamber of Deputies. The French government disdainfully rejected all British and German neutrality proposals. The one great Frenchman living at the time who might have exposed Poincare and his policy and have aligned the majority of the sane French pacific opinion against such foolhardy determination upon war, was the socialist leader Jean Jaures. But he was assassinated by a militant, patriotic and fanatical supporter of the Poincare policy before he could take any effective steps in this direction.





KAISER WILHELM II



# Germany Endeavors To Preserve Peace

As soon as Germany discovered that Austria was apparently determined to go ahead with the Serbian campaign, regardless of consequences, and discerned that these consequences, due to the Franco-Russian procedure, would be likely to bring on a general European war, the Berlin authorities began a feverish, if belated, effort to put pressure upon those in charge of matters at Vienna, in order to restrain Austrian activity and secure some settlement of the situation which would prevent involving all the Great Powers in war. There is little reason to feel that the German authorities, while they may have regarded the Austrian ultimatum as too severe, were inclined to be at all worried about the vigorous Austrian policy in Serbia, provided this did not bring on a general conflict. There is, on the other hand, not the slightest particle of evidence that they were willing to have a European war precipitated over the Balkans, if the Austro-Serbian conflict could possibly be localized. The activities of the German government from July 27th to 29th were concentrated upon the effort to delay the Russians in the matter of intervention in the Austro-Serbian affair, and upon discriminating cooperation with Sir Edward Grey, with the aim of bringing about mediation and arbitration between Russia and Austria. Both efforts failed. The Russian military group, now in undisputed control of Russia, refused to be turned aside from their determination upon war.

Likewise the Austrian authorities, equally set upon going ahead with the punishment of Serbia, refused to heed the Kaiser's admonitions, and even declined to answer some of his telegrams containing the suggestion and offer of mediation. By the 30th the Berlin authorities became highly alarmed at the prospect of war, and Bethmann-Hollweg sent a very insistent telegram, warning Austria that unless she delayed and abated her policy in Serbia the responsibility for a European war might be laid upon her shoulders. On the same day the

Kaiser exclaimed in exasperation that he and his chancellor had been asses to put their necks into a noose through the blank check given to Austria on the 6th of July. That the German militarists were, however, in sympathy and collusion with the Austrian war party is apparent from telegrams sent by Von Moltke to Hotzendorf at the height of the crisis, urging Conrad to stand firm in his military preparations, in spite of the pressure for mediation and peace by the Kaiser and Bethmann-Hollweg. These Moltke telegrams, however, had no influence on the Austrian civil government in 1914.

We now know that the Austrian authorities viewed this German intercession for peace and mediation with little seriousness and were thoroughly determined that nothing short of apparent British intervention should turn them aside from the long-awaited opportunity to discipline Serbia and get the Balkan situation under control. What Germany might have done still further, in the way of attempting to restrain Austria, cannot be said, as by this time the Russian mobilization had been ordered. As soon as this had been discovered by the Germans the only feasible German strategic policy was to warn Russia that the continuation of Russian mobilization must be followed by a German declaration of war, a thing which the Russians from the beginning had known would be the case. One of the chief myths embodied in the Entente propaganda during the war was the allegation that, at the close of July 1914, Austria was showing signs of weakening in her aggressive policy and was exhibiting a willingness to accept the Entente proposals of mediation, when Germany, fearing lest she would lose the opportunity to precipitate a world war, rushed into the breach and brutally and wantonly declared war against Russia. Nothing could be further from the actual facts in the circumstances. Not until July 31st was Austria in the slightest diverted from her original aggressive determination, and, until Germany was confronted by the Russian mobilization, she made sincere efforts to avert any general European conflict over the Serbian episode. When Austria finally altered her policy and agreed to mediate the Serbian issue on July 31st, her change of attitude was due chiefly to the growing probability of British intervention. This Austrian concession came too late to avert the general European war, because the Russian mobilization had been ordered the day before and made a world war inevitable.

When the Kaiser learned of the Russian mobilization on the 29th, he telegraphed the czar, urging him to suspend the mobilization, and warning him that if it was not suspended, Germany would be compelled to declare war upon Russia. The czar was obviously impressed and issued an order suspending the Russian mobilization, but, as was pointed out above, the next day the militarists once more induced him to sanction the mobilization order, and from that time



the war was actually on. Some have urged that Germany should have contented herself with mere counter-mobilization against Russia. But every European military expert of any competence whatever has fully recognized that this policy would have been fatal for Germany, surrounded on both sides by powerful foes, and having as her chief security against the greater Russian numbers her superior mobility and power to strike with rapidity. Professor Langer has well stated this crucial issue:

As for the principle that mobilization means war, it seems downright incredible that even a Frenchman could think that Germany would allow the concentration of the enormous Russian army on her frontiers, with every chance that the French army would also be put on a war footing, and then throw away the only chance of German success, which depended upon speedier mobilization of an inferior number of troops. A German statesman who neglected to answer a Russian mobilization in 1914 by the opening of hostilities would have been guilty of criminal neglect.

The Franco-Russian authorities had fully reckoned with this fact, as it had been a basic consideration in their strategy to recognize that general Russian mobilization would inevitably be followed by a speedy German declaration of war. The Kaiser's rapid and definite effort to avert the Russian general mobilization stands out in sharp contrast to the complete absence of any such attempt on the part of Poincare. Also the admitted perturbation, if not dismay, of the Kaiser in signing the war orders was something far different from the exuberance and enthusiasm of Izvolski and of Poincare and his associates when they recognized that the war was on at last.

It has frequently been stated that Germany moved very slowly in restraining Austria and that her restraint came "too late," in any event. As an actual matter of fact, Germany moved with great swiftness in endeavoring to hold back Austria just as soon as it became apparent that the Austrian action might involve Europe in war. If her action was "too late," it was such only because of the precipitate and premature Russian general mobilization. As we have seen, Russia's hasty and fatal action was in no sense justified, as the Russians knew that Austria could not invade Serbia for more than two weeks after July 28th, when Austria had declared war against Serbia. Furthermore, French and Russian criticism of the German restraint as "too late" possesses little weight, when we reflect that France made no effort whatever to restrain Russia and that England did not attempt to hold back either France or Russia.



SIR EDWARD GREY



# England Refuses to Restrain France & Russia

**A**s to England, it seems certain that, along with Germany, she was one of the two Great Powers involved in active conflict in August 1914, which desired to preserve peace in the crisis. She was unquestionably definitely committed to France and Russia in what was, for all practical purposes, a defensive alliance, although Asquith and Sir Edward Grey had repeatedly denied this when questioned in the House of Commons. There is, however, nothing to lead us to believe that, if he had not been bound by fatal agreement with France and Russia, Sir Edward Grey himself would have preferred war to peace in July 1914, though unquestionably Winston Churchill and certain of the naval clique, together with Bonar Law, Maxse and the conservative nationalists were eager for war.

The recently published British documents prove definitely enough that England was not bound to enter the war by an unequivocal and binding treaty obligation with France or Russia. There were in 1914 some Englishmen who held that England was at least bound by a debt of honor to aid France. It is absolutely apparent, however, that the thing which weighed most of all with those members of the British Cabinet who favored war was the same consideration of alleged British interests which had produced the bellicose stand of Britain in the second Morocco crisis and had also led to the Grey-Cambon correspondence of November 1912. This means, however, that Great Britain was exactly as much bound in fact as though she had been bound by a treaty. The source material on war guilt which we now possess proves that it would be rather difficult to imagine a probable situation in international relations where Russia and France could have been presented to England under more repellent circumstances or Austria

and Germany under better auspices than in the crisis of 1914. Yet, Grey persisted unhesitatingly in his determination to cast England's lot with France and Russia, once it was evident that these Powers had decided to enter the conflict.

The whole key to British policy in 1914 is most admirably phrased by Crowe and Nicolson, the British undersecretaries of state for foreign affairs in 1914, in their comments of July 25th, which were appended to Buchanan's communication to Grey on July 24th. It will be remembered that this was very early in the crisis, being, in fact, before the Serbian reply to Austria had been delivered. Crowe's appraisal of the international situation at this time follows:

The moment has passed when it might have been possible to enlist French support in an effort to hold back Russia.

It is clear that France and Russia are decided to accept the challenge thrown out to them. Whatever we may think of the merits of the Austrian charges against Serbia, France and Russia consider that these are the pretexts, and that the bigger cause of Triple Alliance versus Triple Entente is definitely engaged.

I think it would be impolitic, not to say dangerous, for England to attempt to controvert this opinion, or to endeavor to obscure the plain issue, by any representation at St. Petersburg and Paris.

The point that matters is whether Germany is or is not absolutely determined to have this war now.

There is still the chance that she can be made to hesitate, if she can be induced to apprehend that the war will find England by the side of France and Russia.

I can suggest only one effective way of bringing this home to the German government without absolutely committing us definitely at this stage. If, the moment either Austria or Russia begins to mobilize, His Majesty's Government give orders to put our whole fleet on an immediate war footing this may conceivably make Germany realize the seriousness of the danger to which she would be exposed if England took part in the war.

It would be right, supposing this decision could be taken now, to inform the French and Russian governments of it, and this again would be the best thing we could do to prevent a very grave situation arising as between England and Russia.

It is difficult not to agree with M. Sazonov that sooner or later England will be dragged into the war if it does come. We shall gain nothing by not making up our minds what we can do in circum-



stances that may arise tomorrow.

Should the war come, and England stand aside, one of two things must happen: (a) Either Germany and Austria win, crush France, and humiliate Russia. With the French fleet gone, Germany in occupation of the Channel, with the willing or unwilling cooperation of Holland and Belgium, what will be the position of a friendless England? (b) Or France and Russia win. What would then be their attitude towards England? What about India and the Mediterranean? Our interests are tied up with those of France and Russia in this struggle, which is not for the possession of Serbia, but one between Germany aiming at a political dictatorship in Europe and the Powers who desire to retain individual freedom. If we can help to avoid the conflict by showing our naval strength, ready to be instantly used, it would be wrong not to make the effort.

Whatever therefore our ultimate decision, I consider we should decide now to mobilize the fleet as soon as any other Great Power mobilizes, and that we should announce this decision without delay to the French and Russian governments.

Nicolson added the observation that: "The points raised by Sir Eyre Crowe merit serious consideration, and doubtless the Cabinet will review the situation. Our attitude during the crisis will be regarded by Russia as a test and we must be careful not to alienate her." The policies outlined above were adhered to resolutely by the British Foreign Office throughout the crisis. This meant that England inevitably became a source of encouragement to Franco-Russian bellicosity and was equally irrevocably bound to enter the war. Her only hope of averting the European war lay in restraining Russia or in declaring her neutrality. Both of these she refused to do. Yet, we cannot say that Crowe and Nicolson wanted war for its own sake. On the 30th, Crowe appended to Document number 318 the following reflections with respect to the French and Russian appeals for a British declaration of unflinching solidarity with these Powers:

What must weigh with His Majesty's Government is the consideration that they should not, by a declaration of unconditional solidarity with France and Russia *induce* and *determine* these two Powers to choose the path of war. If and when, however, it is certain that France and Russia cannot avoid war, and are going into it, my opinion, for what it is worth, is that in that case our intervention should be immediate and decided.

At the same time that Crowe and Nicolson were endeavoring to influence Grey in the direction of a favorable attitude toward France and Russia, they were also working unceasingly to prejudice him against Germany by an almost incredibly malicious campaign devoted to maligning German acts and policies. Their distortions, in obvious defiance of facts known to both of them, are at times quite unbelievable, and make the Kaiser's digs at England in his marginal notes on the German documents seem calm and penetrating analysis by comparison. (See *British Documents*, Nos. 149, 174, 185, 249, 264, 293.)

In his general attitude toward the problem of intervention on the side of France and Russia in the event of war, Grey stood shoulder to shoulder with Crowe and Nicolson. He was simply more cautious in the details and method of his procedure. He hesitated because he did not desire to incite France and Russia, because he hated to admit what he had frequently denied in the House of Commons, namely, the existence of secret British understandings with France, and, finally, because he feared an adverse vote in the Cabinet and the House of Commons if he were too hasty. Churchill is revealed in the documents as "raring to go," and thoroughly with Crowe and Nicolson.

In addition to the considerations of the international policy which led Grey to cast his lot with the Entente, it should not be forgotten that there were powerful forces in domestic British politics which strengthened the war party. The Conservatives, led by Bonar Law, felt that a war would delay, if not destroy, the constructive agrarian reforms and financial measures of Lloyd George, while the Ulsterites, under the leadership of Sir Edward Carson, saw in war a real hope of obstructing the introduction of the Irish Home Rule Act. The Northcliffe gang had the journalist's nose for war and its benefits.

As to the anti-war party in the British Cabinet, it has usually been believed that the leaders were John Morley and John Burns, who resigned in protest when it was apparent that England was going into the war. The writer learned in the summer of 1927, however, that, down to the time Morley and Burns resigned, one of the noisiest and most active members of the anti-war group was David Lloyd George. When it became evident that England was bound to enter the war, Lloyd George was faced with the alternative of shifting his position and continuing his brilliant career in politics or reverting to the brave stand as a protestant against folly which he had taken in the Boer War. This time, Lloyd George decided to be on the popular side, and justified his shift on the ground of the moral indignation developed in his bosom by the German invasion of Belgium.

If Germany had not invaded Belgium, but had merely defended herself against French invasion on the western front, it is possible that the English Cabinet would not have been able to enter war on the side of France and Russia;



indeed, it is likely that if they had done so, popular opposition would have paralyzed their efforts. It is true that Sir Edward Grey offered several suggestions as to mediation, but his policy throughout the crisis was vacillating and weak. Having sown the wind between 1910 and 1914, he found it difficult to avoid reaping the whirlwind in 1914. His chief potential trump card which he might have played at the time would have been either an early warning to Germany that an aggressive campaign on her part in the west, and particularly an invasion of Belgium, would certainly bring about English intervention on the side of the Dual Alliance, or a warning to Russia that Russian mobilization would be followed by British neutrality. If he had issued such a warning to Germany in decisive terms around the 25th or 26th of July, it is probable that Germany would, even earlier than she did, have taken steps, and would have still further restrained Austria, and made it more difficult for France and Russia to enlist the aid of England. There is, further, little doubt that he could have called Sazonov's bluff by a threat of neutrality.

But the most damaging indictment against Sir Edward Grey is that he did not put any effective pressure upon Russia or France in their aggressive action following Poincaré's visit to St. Petersburg. Indeed, he actually seems to have had a strong positive influence upon the final decision of the Russians to go ahead with the fatal general mobilization. In spite of the fact that Buchanan, the English ambassador at St. Petersburg, was urging caution on the Russians, Grey, as early as July 25th, told Benckendorff, the Russian ambassador at London, that he believed that the nature of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia would make it necessary for Russia to mobilize against Austria. On the 27th he encouraged the Russians by telling them that they might regard the battle formation of the British fleet as proof of British intervention. This led Sazonov and the Russians to feel at this early date that they could surely count on English as well as French support in their projected military measures which they knew would inevitably bring on a European war.

No fairminded historian can well doubt that Sir Edward Grey had earnestly worked for some pacific adjustment of European difficulties in the period following 1908, or that he was probably among the best intentioned of the foreign secretaries in Europe in 1914. At the same time, no one who has consulted the works of Morley, Loreburn, Morel, Henderson, Montgelas, Ewart and Lutz can well maintain that he behaved as a sincere, devoted and astute champion of peace in the crisis of the early summer of 1914. He must now be included as second only to the French, Russian and Austrian statesmen in degree of actual and immediate responsibility for the world conflict.

It must also, of course, be recognized that, in spite of his long service in the



Foreign Office, Grey was a somewhat weak and vacillating character, rather ignorant of the details of foreign policy and diplomatic problems. Like Berchtold, he was wont to rely for advice upon his under-secretaries. Of these, Sir Arthur Nicolson, former ambassador at St. Petersburg, a favorite of the czar, and a traditional diplomat and militarist, was the most important. Grey admitted that he had been made undersecretary of state in 1910 in order to strengthen the ties between England and Russia. There is little doubt that Grey was as much influenced by Nicolson and Crowe in his decisions of July 1914, as was Berchtold by Forgach, Musilin and others. The British documents show that Sir Eyre Crowe, second under-secretary of state, was perhaps more bellicose than Nicolson.

The delicate and embarrassing situation in which the imminence of war placed the British Cabinet, some of the most eminent members of which resigned rather than participate in any declaration of war, was suddenly removed by what was for Asquith and Grey the heaven-sent episode of the German invasion of Belgium. It is highly probable that the rump British Cabinet would have tried to force the country into war irrespective of the invasion of Belgium, but the actual invasion saved them from a crisis by arousing British indignation, and it put the country rather solidly behind the government in support of active intervention in behalf of the Entente. It should be pointed out, however, that there was no particular ground for ultrasensitivity in the British conscience with respect to the German invasion of Belgium. On two earlier occasions, namely, in 1870 and 1887, the British government and British opinion had repudiated any idea of the definite obligation of Great Britain to protect the existing neutrality of Belgium. England had also, in the decade before the war, made repeated, if futile, efforts to secure Belgian consent to the landing of British troops on Belgian soil in the event of war between the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance.

The complete British documents expose with great thoroughness Grey's exploitation of the Belgian subterfuge. We have already made it clear that Grey, Crowe and Nicolson had formulated their general attitude toward the nature of British policy in the crisis by July 25th, and in none of their arguments for British intervention did any consideration for either Serbia or Belgium enter. The slogan of protection for "poor, innocent little nations" emerged only after the decision to intervene had been reached and a high moral issue was deemed essential to attract the support of British opinion. Before Grey addressed his famous question to France and Germany on the 31st, as to what their stand would be on the issue of Belgian neutrality, he knew from Goschen's conversations with Bethmann-Hollweg what Germany's attitude would be. Even more

significant, Bourgeois and Pages have proved from unpublished French material that, on July 31st, before he had received a reply from either France or Germany, Grey told Cambon that he was personally convinced that England should intervene immediately. He did not dare to give any definite promise, however, as he feared an adverse vote in the Cabinet and the House of Commons unless he could hold over their heads the prospect of a German violation of the neutrality of Belgium. It was well known long ago that England was not bound by the Treaty of 1839 to protect Belgian neutrality, that Grey coldly rejected the German proposal to respect Belgian neutrality, in the event of a promise of British neutrality, and that Grey teased out of Belgium her appeal to the Entente for armed protection. No one has better stated the essential facts in regard to Great Britain and the Belgian issue than the brilliant French writer, Alfred Fabre-Luce:

It had been a welcome turn of fortune which came to the rescue of a menaced government, the medium they employed to show the people the use of a war their leaders considered necessary. It seemed a sufficient reason for an act already decided upon for less good reasons; it assured a political and economic antagonism being reduced to a moral proposition, and thus involved spiritual forces in the war.

It should further be emphasized that the conduct of Great Britain during the World War was scarcely in line with what would naturally have been expected of a country which entered the conflict primarily to sanctify the cause of neutral rights, international law and international obligations. She bulldozed Greece into the War by methods comparable to those used by Germany in Belgium, and her procedure with respect to the international law of blockade, contraband and continuous voyage was such as to constitute a most flagrant violation of international law in these fields. The British assaults upon neutral rights during the war are among the darkest of the blots upon the Allied conduct during this period.





KING VICTOR EMMANUEL OF ITALY

# Italy & Belgium

Italy, along with Belgium, may be freed of any responsibility whatsoever for the outbreak of the war. Italy, after the war had actually started, quite naturally and properly considered which group of combatants seemed likely to offer the most favorable opportunities and results from aid and intervention, and joined the Entente because she felt she had the most to gain thereby. Nevertheless, in the crisis of July 1914, she was distinctly favorable to peace and, as Morhardt has shown, offered the most attractive and feasible plan of mediation and arbitration of the Serbian issue set forth by any great European Power. It has frequently been charged that, whatever the other facts in the circumstances connected with the outbreak of the World War in 1914, certainly Germany and Austria were the most stubborn and determined in rejecting arbitration and mediation. This is no more true than the other phases of the earlier opinion of war responsibility. It is true that, up to July 31st, Austria rejected all schemes for arbitration which looked to any intervention of other Powers in her treatment of Serbia, but it is equally true that the Russians were as determined and precipitate in regard to their mobilization in defense of Serbia. And if Germany declined to accept one of Sir Edward Grey's earlier plans for an arbitration of the Serbian controversy which was disapproved by her ally, Austria, an equally damaging indictment can be made of the Entente for its refusal to consider seriously the very attractive Italian plan for a satisfactory arbitration of the Balkan dispute. And in this rejection of the Italian proposal no one was more prominent than Sir Edward Grey. Germany rejected only one of Grey's peace plans, and for this she suggested what Grey himself admitted at the time to be a better substitute.





WINSTON CHURCHILL, 1910

# Conclusion

**A**s a concise summary of the status of scholarly opinion as to war responsibility, perhaps nothing is better than the following quotation from G. Lowes Dickinson's masterly *International Anarchy*:

Little Serbia stood on the verge of satisfying her national ambitions at the cost of the peoples and civilizations of three continents. For years the little state of Serbia had been undermining the Austrian Empire. . . . What was the Empire to do in self-defense? One can conceive a world in which Austria would not have wished to hold down a nationality against its will. But that would not be the world of history, past or present. Never has an empire resigned before the disruptive forces of nationality. Always it has fought. And I do not believe that there was a state in existence that would not, under similar circumstances, have determined, as Austria did, to finish the menace, once and for all, by war. . . . With every year that passed the Austrian position would get worse and the Serbian better. So at least the Austrians thought, and not without reason. They took their risk according to the usual canons in such matters. They may be accused of miscalculation, but I do not see that they can be accused of wrong by anyone who accepts now, or who accepted then, the principles which have always dictated the policy of states. . . . German diplomacy was cumbrous, stupid and dishonest. Granted it was! But German policy was such as any state would have adopted in her position. The Powers of the Entente say that the offense was Germany's backing of Austria, Germans say that the offense was Russia's backing of Serbia. On that point, really, the whole controversy turns. To my mind the German position is the more reasonable.

The pertinent question is why was the war not localized, as Austria and Germany intended and desired? There is only one answer to this: Because Russia did not choose to allow it. Why not? . . . The answer is that she wanted Constantinople and the straits; that she wanted access to the Mediterranean; that she wanted extension of territory and influence; that she had a "historic mission"; that she must make herself secure; in short, the whole



farrago of superstitions that dominate all states under the conditions of the armed anarchy. . . . France entered for the sake of the balance of power and to recover Alsace-Lorraine; and her technical success in waiting till the declaration of war came from Germany does not alter the position. It had been known for at least two years past, it was reaffirmed more than once during the crisis, that if Germany came in against Russia, France would come in against Germany. . . . At any rate since 1912 France would have entered when Russia did. And does anyone who has perused the previous chapters, and who realizes the state of Europe, believe that Russia would not have started the war a year or two later? . . . And England? . . . She had military and naval commitments to France which were like a suction-pipe to draw her, whether she would or not, into the war. And that approximation to the other two Powers of the Entente was made for no other reason than the maintenance of the balance of power. We had become more afraid of Germany than of our traditional enemies, France and Russia. After all of our commitments to France it would have been base to desert her. Agreed! But what were the objects for which those commitments were made? Our own power, our own empire, our own security.

In the article in *Current History*, May 1924, the author made an effort to arrange the European powers in a numerical order of responsibility. This is, perhaps, valid procedure, but it is probably better simply to let the matter rest by saying that Serbia, Russia and France were the only states in 1914 that desired a European war and worked to secure it. Austria insisted upon a local punitive war, but ardently hoped that this might be kept from growing into a general conflict. Germany, England and Italy were opposed to any kind of a war after July 26th, but were too short-sighted, stupid, selfish or dilatory to be able to avert the calamity.

Another way of stating responsibility for the World War is to separate and analyze the moral and military responsibility. The moral issue is as to whether Austria had a better case than Serbia in 1914, and as to whether Germany was more warranted in backing Austria than was Russia in backing Serbia. In the light of the facts which we now possess, there can be no doubt about this problem. Austria obviously fought in self-defense, while Russia, who had betrayed her Serbian kinsmen in 1908 and in the Turkish negotiations of 1911, precipitated the European war for purposes of diplomatic prestige and territorial aggrandizement. In regard to the military responsibility, likewise, the facts are equally clear. The Russian general mobilization meant inevitable war and it came long before the general mobilization of any other Power. It was also indefensibly premature, as the Russians knew that Austria could take no effective military measures against Serbia within at least two weeks after Russia actually mobilized.

In arriving at a clear understanding about the outbreak of the World War it is also necessary to dismiss the thesis of certain writers that the war was the *inevitable* outcome of the European system of international anarchy and conflicting alliances. No one could possibly be more willing than the present writer to concede the fact that a dangerous and menacing situation was created by the European system of 1914, but this system had existed for forty years without any major war. It was unquestionably the specific personalities and policies of 1914 which produced the great cataclysm. This can be proved very definitely simply by reflecting as to what would have been the outcome of the crisis after the murder of the archduke if Tisza had been in control of Austrian policy, Caillaux in charge of matters in France, Kokovizov, foreign minister of Russia in the place of Sazonov, and Lord Morley or Earl Loreburn in the shoes of Sir Edward Grey. Under such circumstances it is utterly inconceivable that war could have resulted. Indeed, it is highly probable that there would have been no war had there been merely an interchange of one man, namely, if Caillaux had been presiding over the destinies of France instead of the doughty Lorrainer, Raymond Poincare.

Another illusion in regard to war responsibility which it is necessary to combat is the view that Revisionism constitutes an extreme emotional swing of the pendulum away from the wartime fictions, and that ultimately the truth will be found to lie somewhere between the views expressed in William Stearns Davis' *Roots of the War* and those expounded in the present chapter. This is certainly a benign attitude and, *a priori*, seems sensible. The fact is, however, that we were so blinded by wartime propaganda as to the black devilishness of the Central Powers and the lamb-like innocence of the Entente that we are still unprepared for the extent of the exposure of Serbia, France and Russia which the documents have produced. Almost without exception, all the new material of the last three years has served to bolster up an even more advanced version of Revisionism, and there is no probability that any important extenuating material will be published hereafter which will aid the cause of the Entente. If such material existed it would have seen light before this. On the other hand, we still have a trump card to be played against the Entente, namely, the French documents and the secret Russian correspondence with Serbia. Therefore, instead of settling back into any such weak-kneed position as that taken by Professor Bernadotte Schmitt in *Foreign Affairs* for October 1926, we can be sure that Revisionism will not have to retreat a step, but will continue to leave the more conservative historians breathless for a long time to come.





PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON



# How the United States Became Involved

**T**he reasons for the entry of the United States into the World War are many and complex. About the only thing which may be stated clearly and dogmatically is that the resumption of German submarine warfare in 1917 was the occasion and not the reason for our becoming a belligerent. In the first place, due partly to industrial and commercial rivalry and partly to the pro-British sources of most of our news concerning Germany in the decade prior to 1914, the United States had grown progressively more cool toward Germany. Not only did most American newspapers get much of their news concerning Germany indirectly through the Northcliffe press in England, but they also frequently employed jointly the same representatives in Germany. Particularly notorious here was the influence of Frederick William Wile, German correspondent for both the Northcliffe press in England and leading American papers like *The New York Times* and *The Chicago Tribune*. Wile did his best to poison American opinion in regard to Germany, and he greatly exaggerated the Saverne Affair of 1913 which was particularly exploited in anti-German newspaper circles. This tendency was helped on after the outbreak of the war through the German invasion of Belgium and the exploitation of this act by the Entente propagandists. Therefore, before our material interests were vitally at stake, we were inclined to sympathize with the Allies, though popular sentiment was divided throughout the country.

It was not long, however, before important American interests were involved. The Entente borrowed enormous sums from the American bankers and began at once to place great orders in the United States for war materiel. Germany raised most of her funds by domestic loans and by taxation, and American banking houses also frowned on loans to Germany. Likewise, the British command of the seas and the illegal interference of Britain with neu-

tral trade, prevented Germany from purchasing war materiel from the United States, had she wished to do so. Therefore, our material interests were almost exclusively on the side of the Entente. We were not long in responding to the dictates of those interests. In September, 1914, former Ambassador Myron T. Herrick, Ambassador William Graves Sharp and Robert Bacon, all closely connected with great American banking houses, told the famous French publicist, Gabriel Hanotaux, that France should keep up courage. Though there was as yet little pro-war sentiment in America, they promised Hanotaux that in due time this country would be brought in on the side of France. Writing in the Anglo-American number of *The Manchester Guardian*, on January 27th, 1920, Mr. Thomas W. Lamont of J.P. Morgan and Company, set forth the facts about the attitude of his firm with great candor:

At the request of certain of the foreign governments the firm of Messrs. J.P. Morgan and Company undertook to coordinate the requirements of the Allies, and then to bring about regularity and promptness in fulfilling those requirements. Those were the days when American citizens were being urged to remain neutral in action, in word, and even in thought. But our firm had never for one moment been neutral; we didn't know how to be. From the very start we did everything we could to contribute to the cause of the Allies. And this particular work had two effects; one in assisting the Allies in the production of goods and munitions in America necessary to the Allies' vigorous prosecution of the war; the other in helping to develop this great and profitable export trade that our country has had.

It need not be assumed that the attitude of the other large banking houses was notably different from that of the greatest.

It is not necessary to accept a naive theory of economic determinism in order to realize that the American press responds very quickly and decisively to the trend of business opinion in the country. Hence, the American papers quickly took up the Entente cause with enthusiasm, though there were a few exceptions, chiefly the lesser papers in Germanic sections of the country. Further, a war is an excellent thing for newspapers, which fact gave the press a special interest in favoring intervention. Of the two, however, the business pressure was far the most powerful in swinging the newspapers for war. The American interests were ably aided by British propagandists in lining up the American press and in "educating" American opinion. Sir Gilbert



Parker, chief of the British propaganda service in the United States, thus describes in *Harper's Magazine* for March 1918, how England set us straight as to war issues:

Perhaps here I may be permitted to say a few words concerning my own work since the beginning of the war. It is in a way a story by itself, but I feel justified in writing one or two paragraphs about it. Practically since the day war broke out between England and the Central Powers I became responsible for American publicity. I need hardly say that the scope of my department was very extensive and its activities widely ranged. Among the activities was a weekly report to the British Cabinet on the state of American opinion, and constant touch with the permanent correspondents of American newspapers in England. I also frequently arranged for important public men in England to act for us by interviews in American newspapers; and among these distinguished people were Mr. Lloyd George (the present prime minister), Viscount Grey, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Bonar Law, the archbishop of Canterbury, Sir Edward Carson, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Walter Runciman, (the lord chancellor), Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Lord Cromer, Will Crooks, Lord Curzon, Lord Gladstone, Lord Haldane, Mr. Henry James, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Selfridge, Mr. Zangwill, Mrs. Humphry Ward, and fully a hundred others.

Among other things, we supplied 360 newspapers in the smaller states of the United States with an English newspaper, which gives a weekly review and comment of the affairs of the war. We established connection with the man in the street through cinema pictures of the army and navy, as well as through interviews, articles, pamphlets etc.; and by letters in reply to individual American critics, which were printed in the chief newspapers of the state in which they lived, and were copied in newspapers of other neighboring states. We advised and stimulated many people to write articles; we utilized the friendly services and assistance of confidential friends; we had reports from important Americans constantly, and established association, by personal correspondence, with influential and eminent people of every profession in the United States, beginning with university and college presidents, professors and sci-

entific men, and running through all the ranges of the population. We asked our friends and correspondents to arrange for speeches, debates and lectures by American citizens, but we did not encourage Britishers to go to America and preach the doctrine of entrance into the war. Besides an immense private correspondence with individuals, we had our documents and literature sent to great numbers of public libraries, Y.M.C.A. societies, universities, colleges, historical societies, clubs and newspapers.

It is hardly necessary to say that the work was one of extreme difficulty and delicacy, but I was fortunate in having a wide acquaintance in the United States and in knowing that a great many people had read my books and were not prejudiced against me. . . . Also, it should be remembered that the Society of Pilgrims, whose work of international unity cannot be overestimated, has played a part in promoting understanding between the two peoples, and the establishment of the American Officers' Club in Lord Leconfield's house in London with H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught as president, has done, and is doing immense good. It should also be remembered that it was the Pilgrims' Society under the fine chairmanship of Mr. Harry Britain, which took charge of the Hon. James Beck when he visited England in 1916, and gave him so good a chance to do great work for the cause of unity between the two nations. I am glad and proud to think that I had something to do with these arrangements which resulted in the Pilgrims taking Mr. Beck into their charge.

Next to the contention that Germany willfully launched the World War, the leading myth exploited by Entente propaganda to deceive the United States and induce us to enter the war was the assertion that Germany introduced into her conduct of war the most frightful and savage practices. These were explained by some as being due to the fact that the German race was utterly uncivilized. Such atrocious conduct was deemed but natural for a nation of "Huns." Others, while not objecting to the thesis of German savagery, held that the German practices were the result of a sinister and studied German program. The Germans had decided to wage a war of frightfulness in order to terrify the enemy and break their morale through fear of resistance. Among the forms of atrocious conduct with which the Germans were charged, we may mention the crucifixion of French and Belgian sol-



diers, cutting the hands off numerous Belgian children, the rape of innumerable Belgian women and girls, cutting the breasts off Belgian and Polish women, robbing not only private homes but churches and hospitals, and sinking great numbers of gallant Allied sailors, taking particular delight in picking off those struggling helplessly in the water.

Great Britain was most systematic and efficient in inventing and publishing these tales, and she made a great stroke in getting James Bryce to affix his signature to a singularly complete and varied collection of stories of German savagery and rapacity in Belgium. This so-called "Bryce report" was released in the United States shortly after the sinking of the *Lusitania*, and had a great effect in estranging American opinion from Germany on account of the confidence which the American citizens reposed in Mr. Bryce. The atrocities myth was the chief instrument utilized by the British propagandists and the American financial interests in "educating" American opinion up to the point where we were willing to enter the war.

Once any effort was made to investigate the foundations for these lurid tales, they were at once shown to be fantastic. Of course, war is not a pleasant and esthetic form of recreation, and many things happened during its progress which the participants on both sides would be only too glad to forget. At the same time, it can no longer be maintained that the conduct of German soldiers in regard to war methods was a whit worse than that of other combatants, not excluding the soldiers of the United States. Premiers Lloyd George of England and Nitti of Italy authorized an investigation of all cases of alleged atrocities conducted against Belgian civilians which were mentioned with sufficient exactness to allow an investigation to be started. Their investigators were unable to uncover a single case of willful mutilation, whereas the Bryce Report and similar documents alleged that they existed by the thousand. In the summer of 1927 the German government proposed that the whole question of alleged Belgian "snipers" and German retaliation be investigated and reported upon by an impartial committee. The Belgian government refused the suggestion, and it was strongly supported by the Belgian and the French papers. They feared lest this might cause a complete overhauling of the whole atrocities situation.

Frenchmen interested in the truth have told how, in the French propaganda headquarters, leading French artists manufactured casts of such exhibits as mutilated French and Belgian children which were then photographed and scattered broadcast. Ferdinand Avenarius, in an illuminating and amazing brochure, entitled *How the War Madness Was Engineered*, has shown how the Entente obtained many of the alleged authentic pictures of



atrocities. Pictures of German officers, with trophies awarded before the World War broke out, were represented as German soldiers gloating over spoils taken from churches and homes. The pictures of the horrible Russian pogroms against the Jews in Poland in 1905 and later years were displayed as literal pictorial records of the German conduct in Poland in 1914-15. General Charteris has recently revealed how he created the myth of the German corpse-factory by exchanging the captions on two pictures—one of a train-load of German soldiers being taken back for burial and the other of a load of dead horses destined for soap and fertilizer plants. He told further of faking a diary to be put in the pocket of a dead German, recounting how this German had been working in such a corpse-factory before coming to the front to be shot. As to the submarine warfare and submarine atrocities, even Admiral Sims admitted that there was but one case of a submarine atrocity on record attributable to German sailors and that in this case the responsible officers were promptly and severely punished. In other words, the whole framework of the contention that the Germans were only a collection of super-gorillas, devoid of human traits, has collapsed no less completely than such war-guilt fictions as the Potsdam Conference. A friend of the writer approached James Bryce about the Bryce Report some time before Mr. Bryce's death, but Bryce refused to attempt any defense beyond the cynical assertion that one must expect almost anything in wartime. Arthur Ponsonby, the able British statesman and publicist, has recently compensated for the Bryce Report by publishing a remarkable exposure of Entente propaganda, in a comprehensive anthology, entitled *Falsehood in Wartime*.

The insincerity of the Entente horror concerning alleged German conduct during the war is well exhibited by the behavior of the French and British since 1918. In Morocco the French bombarded non-combatants frequently from airplanes. In Syria the same thing was repeated; and for trivial reasons, compared with the excuse for the German invasion of Belgium, the French reduced to ruins the city of Damascus, a city infinitely more precious in the history of art and tradition than Rheims, Amiens, Louvain or any of the cities which the Germans were so severely criticized for shelling. Finally, the conduct of the French, in relation to the behavior of the French negro troops toward German women in the occupied Rhine towns, was far more deplorable than anything which can be proved of the Germans during wartime. In fact, the well demonstrated actualities concerning the "black terror" on the Rhine are nearly as bad as any of the stories of German rapine in Belgium during the war. By far the greatest and most indefensible atrocity which took place after 1914 was the British blockade of Germany for near-



ly a year after the Armistice, which resulted in the unnecessary starvation of some 800,000 German women and children. This is, perhaps, the most staggering example of human brutality in modern times. In the face of this, one need hardly mention the notorious Amritsar-massacre in India in 1919.

The British campaign in converting American opinion to the Entente viewpoint was so rapidly and completely successful that it amazed even Lord Northcliffe. While on a trip to the United States he remarked to a prominent Columbia University professor that only the Chinese equalled the Americans in their gullibility in accepting the Entente version of the causes and issues of the World War.

There is little probability that President Wilson was in any way consciously influenced by America's material interests in the struggle. Down to 1917 he had refused to allow any member of the firm of J.P. Morgan and Company to enter the White House. Mr. Wilson was, however, very pro-British in his cultural sympathies. As Hale and others have shown, he admired British culture and statesmen beyond all others. His great heroes were men like Milton, Burke and Adam Smith. He knew little of continental literature, statesmen or politics, in spite of the fact that he had once written a college textbook on formal aspects of European government. He really felt that Great Britain and her allies were fighting for civilization against the brutal tactics of the Germans, and that civilization was actually hanging in the balance. He did not desire to have the United States enter the war if England seemed likely to win without our aid, but as soon as this appeared doubtful, he was convinced that we should enter as early as he could persuade Congress and the country to follow him. Wilson's own pro-British proclivities were greatly strengthened by the influence of those two vigorous Anglo-maniacs, Ambassador Page and Secretary Houston. Mr. Wilson's attitude on this point was well summarized by Wilson's attorney general, T.W. Gregory, in a letter to *The New York Times* for January 29th, 1925, telling of Wilson's response to Cabinet criticism of Great Britain's violations of our rights as neutrals:

After patiently listening, Mr. Wilson said, in that quiet way of his, that the ordinary rules of conduct had no application to the situation; that the Allies were standing with their backs to the wall, fighting wild beasts; that he would permit nothing to be done by our country to hinder or embarrass them in the prosecution of the war unless admitted rights were grossly violated, and that this policy must be understood and settled.

Thus did Mr. Wilson live up to his stated ideal that every true American must be neutral in thought as well as deed.

Later, Mr. Wilson added to his pro-British reasons for desiring to enter the war the conception that unless he was at the peace conference he could not act decisively in bringing about a peace of justice and permanence. Shortly before we entered the war in April 1917, Mr. Wilson confessed this motive to Miss Jane Addams in a conference with her at the White House, which she thus describes in her *Peace and Bread in Time of War*:

The president's mood was stern and far from the scholar's detachment as he told us of recent disclosures of German machinations in Mexico and announced the impossibility of any form of adjudication. He still spoke to us, however, as to fellow pacifists to whom he was forced to confess that war had become inevitable. He used one phrase which I had heard Colonel House use so recently that it still stuck firmly in my memory. The phrase was to the effect that, as head of a nation participating in the war, the president of the United States would have a seat at the peace table, but that if he remained the representative of a neutral country he could at best only "call through a crack in the door." The appeal he made was, in substance, that the foreign policies which we so extravagantly admired, could have a chance if he were there to push and to defend them, but not otherwise. It was as if his heart's desire spoke through his words and dictated his view of the situation. But I found my mind challenging his whole theory of leadership.

The relation of the interests to Mr. Wilson's work in bringing the United States into the war was an indirect one. They had brought the papers around to the Entente position, and Wilson was unquestionably to some extent affected by the newspapers and the Entente propaganda in his gradual conversion to the conviction that the Germans were "wild beasts." Then, when he had decided that we should go into the war, he had an eager and subservient press at his beck and call. Always an intensely vain man, he also realized by 1917 that popularity with the press lay on the side of intervention.

It is of little importance to examine the actual legal issues at stake in our entry into the war, as they had slight influence on our decisions. England continually and most extensively violated the long established rights of neu-



trials with respect to blockade, continuous voyage and contraband, as well as inflicting innumerable minor humiliations on neutral traders and using the American flag freely for her vessels. Germany retaliated by submarine warfare, and in this way placed in jeopardy American lives and property. England violated our rights infinitely more extensively than Germany, but less dramatically, especially in that the German procedure threatened American lives. Germany, however, offered to accept Mr. Bryan's proposal that England should obey international law on the seas and that Germany should give up her submarine warfare. England, knowing her Page and Wilson, refused even to discuss such a proposition. In other words, as Mr. Wilson himself admitted, we had two sets of international law, one for Germany and one for Great Britain. Mr. Bryan was too honest to go on in this way, and resigned as secretary of state.

Many would cite the *Lusitania* case as an example of British rectitude and German depravity and lawlessness, but such an attitude betokens an ignorance of the facts in the case. The Germans made a great tactical blunder in sinking the *Lusitania* but the legal right was all on their side. The *Lusitania* had been armed by Britain before the war, it was in 1915 registered as an auxiliary cruiser in the British navy, it was carrying a heavy cargo of ammunition and other munitions of war, and prospective American passengers had been amply warned by the German government and Mr. Bryan. Therefore the *Lusitania* lost her status as a merchant vessel and could be legally sunk without warning. Civilians embarked on her at their own risk, and Americans taking passage on the *Lusitania* were, in addition, conniving at the violation of the law of their own country by accepting passage upon a vessel carrying explosives. Yet, because the Germans sank this ship, Mr. Roosevelt, who, less than a year before had defended the German invasion of Belgium, would have had this country leap into the war on the side of Great Britain.

Finally, it remains to be shown that the United States did not enter the war because of the resumption of submarine warfare by Germany. Mr. Wilson and Colonel House decided by December 1915, that the time had come when England needed our active assistance. Hence, Wilson sent House abroad in January 1916, with a peace plan which embodied German admission of defeat and appropriate penalties. If Germany would not accept this, then the United States would, if House and Wilson were successful, enter the war on the side of the Allies.<sup>7</sup> The Entente, however, refused to accept Wilson's plan, because it proposed a far more lenient treatment of Germany than the Entente had embodied in the secret treaties. Therefore, Colonel

House had to wend his way sorrowfully homeward.

Mr. Wilson played his next card at home. One morning early in April 1916, Mr. Wilson called in conference the Democratic leaders of Congress, Champ Clark, Hal Flood and Claude Kitchin, told them that he felt that it was time the United States entered the war, and asked for their support in leading Congress to accept his plan. These men were opposed to war and hence, rejected his proposals somewhat heatedly. Wilson knew that it was a poor time to split the party just before an election, so he dropped the matter at once and, with Colonel House, mapped out a pacifist platform for the coming campaign. Governor Martin Glynn of New York and Senator Ollie James of Kentucky were sent to the St. Louis convention to make keynote speeches, which were based on the slogan: "He kept us out of war!" Senator James' pacifist speech stampeded the convention and he was requested to repeat it. The campaign was fought out on this basis and Mr. Wilson was reelected by a narrow margin.

Sure of four more years in the White House, Mr. Wilson no longer had to worry about pacifist Democrats, as he could count on the support of bellicose Republicans in his war policies. Before he had been inaugurated a second time, the Germans played directly into his hands by announcing the resumption of submarine warfare. They thus furnished Wilson with as admirable an occasion for putting the United States into the conflict as that with which they had presented Grey through their invasion of Belgium. It was fortunate for Britain and the bankers that the Germans made this timely blunder, as Great Britain had overdrawn her American credit by some \$450,000,000 and the bankers were having trouble floating more private loans. It was necessary now to pass on the burden of financing the Entente to the Federal Treasury.

We thus entered the struggle, along with the armies of the czar of Russia, the mikado of Japan, and the king of Italy, to make the world safe for democracy and to bring about peace based upon right, justice and generosity.

We have conventionally believed that our entry into the war was a great boon to civilization and that it saved the world from German domination and the imposition of German militarism and tyranny upon the planet as a whole. The facts are almost exactly the reverse of this picture. In 1916 and 1917 Germany was ready for peace on very moderate and constructive terms, certainly terms far more fair and more to the advantage of the world at large than those imposed at Versailles two years later. In fact, if the American papers had been able or willing to get hold of, and print, the full German



terms of peace and to portray accurately the state of the German mind in 1916 and 1917, there is little probability that Mr. Wilson or any one else could have forced the United States into the World War. There is little probability that Germany could have conquered the Allies even though the United States had not intervened in their behalf. The best that even Ludendorff hoped for after 1916 was enough success to force an honorable peace. Germany would have welcomed an honorable peace; it was the Allies who were bent upon the destruction of Germany even after they knew that a just peace could be secured by negotiation.

What the American entry did was to encourage the Allies in the wastes and savagery of the "knock-out" victory which led to Versailles, the blockade of Germany after the Armistice, and the outrages in the Ruhr. The highly precarious foundation upon which Europe stands today, with almost a sure guarantee of future war, as well as the spread of Bolshevism, which was due to the prolongation of the war after the Russian people desired to withdraw, may both be traced to the results of American intervention. Our entry was, thus, a menace to both the "Reds" who met punishment as a result of the Palmer inquisition, and the conservatives who had been thrown into a panic by Bolshevism.

There are some observers, especially German radicals and non-German sentimentalists, who contend that the American entry into the World War was vindicated if for no other reason, because it hastened democracy and republicanism in Germany. Now the writer is well known as a person of liberal political outlook and a believer in the principles of political freedom, but he can scarcely believe that the difference between a constitutional monarchy and a republic in Germany is worth the price which was paid in the continuance of the war, in the crushing humiliation of Germany, in the deprivation of Germany of valuable territory, in the loss of the German colonies, and in the horrors of the blockade after the Armistice, which cost Germany nearly a million lives among non-combatants, to mention but a few of the more disastrous results for Germany of American entry into the war. It may further be doubted whether the German Republic was worth the international anarchy which has been continued in Europe as a result of the Entente victory and the dictated atrocity of Versailles.

If America had not entered the war we should, in all probability, have secured a decent negotiated peace, the "Balkanization" of Europe would have been prevented, and good feeling would have been restored much more rapidly between the formerly warring peoples. The German monarchy would have been compelled to grant reforms which would have made it similar to

the purely formal regal ornamentation in England. While not an apologist for Hohenzollern omniscience, the writer would hold that the Hohenzollern dynasty was better fitted by tradition and achievement to serve as an ornamental symbol of German unity and progress than the Hanoverian dynasty which graces the British throne and causes democrats abroad no grave concern. After 1918 it was no longer a choice in Germany between tyranny and radical democracy.

One of the main activities of the Allied censorship and propaganda in this period consisted in keeping from the United States any adequate knowledge of the very real desire for peace in Germany at this time and the highly reasonable and statesmanlike nature of the German proposals. These really sincere efforts of the Germans were portrayed as but insidious German propaganda designed to divide the Allied Powers. The chief reason why the Entente statesmen did not accept these German terms and end of war, with all its attendant miseries and losses, two years before the armistice, was their knowledge of the apparent breaking down of American neutrality and the ever brightening hope that the United States would ultimately come into the conflict on their side.

Mr. Page's support of the British cause practically destroyed in England all fear of American protests against the Entente violations of neutral rights and made England quite unwilling to consider any peace proposals at the close of 1916. Had the British believed that the United States meant its protests seriously they would most certainly have listened with some patience to the peace proposals, but Page gave assurance that we were really their ally and that they had nothing to fear from us. Had Mr. Wilson dismissed Mr. Page early in the war and replaced him by an honest, courageous, farsighted and well-informed ambassador, and preserved a strict neutrality on the part of this country, there seems little doubt that the war would have to come to an end by December 1916, and would have been settled by a treaty of peace infinitely superior in every way to that which was worked out in 1919-20 and imposed by the victors at Versailles.

Page and Wilson must in part bear the responsibility, not merely for the expense, losses and miseries brought to the United States by the World War but also for the destruction in Europe following 1916, both in war and in the arrogant and atrocious policies of France and England, particularly the former since the Armistice and the Peace Treaty. Already, as Mr. Gregory complains, England has begun to forget or minimize our contributions to winning the war, while the hatred of the United States in France exceeds anything which has existed since the French denunciation of the United States



during the Spanish-American War. The absurd and baseless contention that the Allies really saved the lives of countless millions of Americans, as well as preserving our national independence and preventing us from becoming a slavish dependency of Potsdam, has been made the foundation for a serious proposal that we should cancel the Allied indebtedness to the United States. Such mythology is on a par with the "corpse-factory" fabrications of the war period itself. There may be valid grounds for debt cancellation, but this alleged justification is one of the most ironically amusing propositions in the history of humanity.

Added to the material and financial expenditures of the United States, due to our participation in the World War, are the political corruption and incompetence which it has generated, the raids upon American liberty by Palmer and his associates and successors, and the general decline of morale in American public and private life which has been unparalleled by any earlier developments in the history of our country. In this connection we should not fail to remember the notorious debauching of American traditions with respect to enemy-owned property by the alien property custodian which involved the most dangerous legal jockeying and subterfuge and set a very menacing precedent for some future war when the United States might be the loser by such procedure.

If we honestly face the facts we shall probably have to agree that the entry of the United States into the World War was an almost unmitigated disaster not only to us but to Europe. We shall ultimately understand that Woodrow Wilson's greatest message to the world was not his war propaganda or his disregarded Fourteen Points, but his much ridiculed proclamation that the only possible peace was a "peace without victory."

The degree to which Mr. Wilson was compelled to develop psychic blindness, amnesia and anesthesia in order to "stomach" Entente idealism towards the end of the war is well brought out by his refusal to recognize the existence of the secret treaties until concretely faced by them at the Paris Peace Conference. Though they were published in the winter of 1917-18 in *The New York Evening Post* and elsewhere, though the editor of that paper personally put them in the hands of Secretary Tumulty with the promise of the latter that he would call them to the attention of Mr. Wilson, and though Walter Lippmann contends that he is personally certain that Mr. Wilson actually knew of their existence and nature soon after they were published, yet when the latter left for Paris at the close of November, 1918, he professed to be in complete ignorance of these documents which Mr. Balfour had been careful not to disclose when on his mission to this country in June 1917.

Perhaps the best epitaph on the whole episode of America and the World War, as well as the finest proof of the futility of intervention, is contained in the statement of Mr. Wilson to James Kerney on December 7, 1923, relative to the policy of Poincare in the Ruhr: "I should like to see Germany clean up France, and I should like to see Jusserand and tell him so to his face."



## REFERENCES

# References

### SELECTED REFERENCES

- Barnes, Harry Elmer, *The Genesis of the World War*, 3rd edition, Knopf, 1929.
- Bausman, Frederick, *Facing Europe*, Century, 1926.
- Dickinson, G.L., *The International Anarchy, 1904-1914*, Century, 1926.
- Fabre-Luce, Alfred, *The Limitations of Victory*, Knopf, 1926.
- Fay, S.B., *The Origins of the World War*, 2 Vols., Macmillan, 1928  
(2nd edition in one volume, Macmillan, 1930).
- Lutz, Hermann, *Lord Grey and the World War*, Knopf, 1928.
- Montgelas, Count Maximilian, *The Case for the Central Powers*, Knopf, 1925.
- Ponsonby, Arthur, *Falsehood in Wartime*, Institute for Historical Review, 1980.
- Renouvin, Pierre, *The Immediate Origins of the War*, Yale University Press, 1928.
- Turner, J.K., *Shall It Be Again?*, Huebsch, 1922.

### GLOSSARY OF NAMES

- Herbert ASQUITH (later Earl Oxford and Asquith), British Prime Minister (Liberal Party) 1908-1916.
- Count Alexander BENCKENDORFF, Russian Ambassador to Great Britain, 1903-1916.
- Count Leopold von BERCHTOLD, Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, 1912-1915.
- Andrew BONAR-LAW, Wartime Leader of Conservative Party in British Parliament. Later Prime Minister, 1922-1923.
- Sir George BUCHANAN, British Ambassador to Russia, 1910-1918.
- Joseph CAILLAUX, French Premier, 1911-1912.
- Paul CAMBON, French Ambassador to Great Britain, 1898-1920.
- Winston CHURCHILL, First Lord of the Admiralty (equiv. U.S. Secretary of the Navy) 1911-1915 and

1939-1940. Subsequently Prime Minister, 1940-1945 and (as Sir Winston Churchill) 1951-1955.

Sir Eyre CROWE, Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Great Britain) 1906-1925. This is a senior civil service post not a Cabinet post.

Colonel Dragutin DIMITRIEVITCH, Regicide of King Alexander and Queen Draga of Serbia in 1903. Leading member of Serbian terrorist organization, Black Hand or Union or Death. Chief of Intelligence of Serbian General Staff, 1913. Trained and equipped assassins of Arch-duke Franz Ferdinand at Sarajevo, June 28, 1914.

General Sergei DOBROROLSKI, Chief of Mobilization Section of Russian General Staff, 1914.

Sir Edward GREY (later Viscount Grey), British Foreign Minister, 1905-1916.

Franz Josef (von HAPSBURG), Austrian Kaiser and King of Hungary (from 1867) 1848-1916.

General Baron Conrad von HOTZENDORFF, Chief of Austro-Hungarian General Staff, 1906-1911 and 1912-1917.

Alexander IZVOLSKI, Russian Foreign Minister 1906-1910; Ambassador to France, 1910-1917.

Jean JAURES, Pacifistic leader of French Socialist Party; assassinated in July, 1914.

Field Marshal Helmuth von MOLTKE, Chief of German General Staff, 1906-1914.

Sir Arthur NICOLSON, Permanent Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs (British) 1910-1916. See above, Sir Eyre Crowe.

A.M. PALMER, United States Attorney-General, 1919.

Raymond POINCARE, Premier of France, 1912-1913; President of France 1913-1920.

Sergei SAZONOV, Russian Foreign Minister, 1910-1916. Count Steven TISZA, Hungarian Prime Minister, 1913-1917. Joseph TUMULTY, Private Secretary to Woodrow Wilson.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

# Meet Harry Elmer Barnes

**H**ARRY ELMER BARNES was indisputably one of the great intellects of his era. Historian, sociologist, criminologist and social reformer—mentor to scholars worldwide—Professor Barnes wrote more than 40 books, including a variety of college textbooks which were standards in their respective fields. Historian Murray Rothbard described Barnes as “the Compleat Historian.” Born in Auburn, New York on June 15, 1889, Barnes received his doctorate from Columbia University and pursued post-graduate studies at Harvard. He taught history and historical sociology at prestigious universities throughout the country. His two-volume *History of Western Civilization* (1935) and *An Intellectual and Cultural History of the Western World* (1937) remain timeless classics. His *Genesis of the World War* (1926), *In Quest of Truth and Justice* (1928) and *World Politics in Modern Civilization* (1930) were major contributions to a full and accurate understanding of the events that led to World War I. Although Barnes’ post-war studies were highly controversial, his subsequent scholarly inquiries into the causes of World War II were even more so.



*Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace* (1953), edited by Barnes, explored the forces that led to war. “Truth,” said Barnes, “is always the first war casualty. The emotional disturbances and distortions in historical writing are greatest in wartime.” Barnes’ aim was “to correct the historical record in the light of a more complete collection of historical facts, a more calm political atmosphere, and a more objective attitude.”

Barnes died in 1968. He is remembered by the sobriquet given him by historian Carl Becker: “the Learned Crusader.” THE BARNES REVIEW strives to carry on Barnes’ passionate dedication to bringing perceptions of history into accord with the facts.



**"Truth is always the first war casualty."**

**—Harry Elmer Barnes**

# **World War One: Who Started It?**

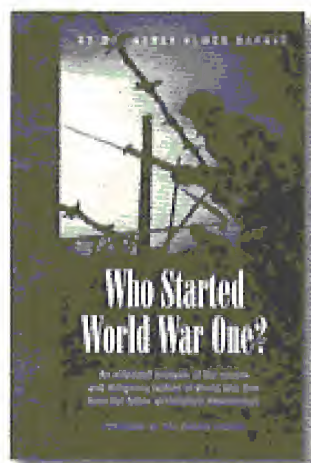
**World War One:** It was the first of the devastating modern wars, involving nations from across the globe and resulting in millions of casualties—both civilians and combat soldiers.

**OF COURSE THE GERMANS STARTED THE WAR**, at least that is what we have been led to believe by those who wrote the history of World War I, i.e., the victors. But how much blame should Germany bear? And what about Austria, England, Russia, Belgium, Italy and France, for that matter?

What was the complex set of circumstances that blew out of control after the assassination of a member of Austrian royalty? What other options were left to the nations involved? How did England and Germany get involved in these matters? And why were Russia and France so eager for a fight? How did the United States really get roped into the bloody conflict taking place thousands of miles away?

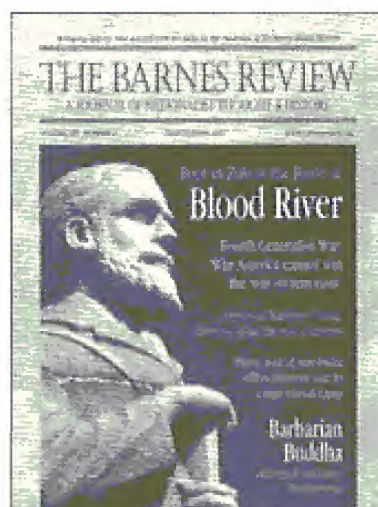
Follow along as famed Revisionist historian Harry Elmer Barnes walks us through the complex history of the time—from the perspective of each of the major participant nations—and makes it easy to determine who started WWI.

***Who Started World War One?*** (softcover, 60 pages, #530, \$6) by Harry Elmer Barnes is available from TBR BOOK CLUB, P.O. Box 15877, Washington, D.C. 20003. **Bulk Prices:** 2-5 copies \$5 each; 6-9 copies \$4.50 each; 10-49 copies \$4 each; 50-99 \$3.50 each; 100 or more \$3 each. No add'l discounts on this booklet. Add S&H: One booklet add \$3. More than one booklet add: \$5 S&H up to \$50; \$10 from \$50.01 to \$100. \$15 S&H on orders over \$100. Email [TBRca@aol.com](mailto:TBRca@aol.com) for S&H outside the United States. Call toll free 1-877-773-9077 to charge to major credit cards. See more great books and videos online at [www.barnesreview.org](http://www.barnesreview.org).



# *In the maverick tradition of one of the great historians of the modern era . . .*

No topic is "too controversial" for The BARNES REVIEW, the most interesting history magazine published anywhere today. Commemorating the trail-blazing path of the towering 20th Century revisionist historian, the late Harry Elmer Barnes, TBR's mission is to separate historical truth from propaganda and to bring history into accord with the facts. Founded in 1994 by veteran American nationalist Willis A. Carto—a personal friend of Barnes—*The Barnes Review* concurs with Rousseau's maxim that "Falsification of history has done more to impede human development than any one thing known to mankind." TBR covers all aspects of history from the dawn of man to recent events and also places a special focus on the philosophy of nationalism. As such, TBR proudly describes itself as a "journal of nationalist thought" and dares to be politically incorrect in a day when Cultural Marxism prevails in the mass media, in academia and in day-to-day life. TBR's editorial board of advisors encompasses historians, philosophers and academics from all over the face of the planet, intellectuals united in their desire to bring peace to the world by exposing the lies and prevarications of the past that have brought us to where we are today. If you believe everything you see in the "responsible" media or think that absolutely everything that appears in most college-level history texts is true, you might be shocked by what you see in TBR—but if you are shocked by what you see in TBR, then that's all the more reason you need to join the growing ranks of independent-minded free-thinkers from all walks of life and all over the world who are longtime TBR subscribers.



## **Isn't it time you subscribe?**

THE BARNES REVIEW \$46 for ONE year (six bimonthly issues—64 pages each): Including this special free bonus: A FREE COPY OF Michael Collins Piper's blockbuster book *The New Jerusalem*. That's a \$20 gift free for a one-year domestic subscription. Subscribe for two years at \$78 and get *The New Jerusalem* PLUS Mark Glenn's *No Beauty in the Beast: Israel Without Her Mascara*. Outside the U.S. email [TBRca@aol.com](mailto:TBRca@aol.com) for international rates.

***Call 1-877-773-9077 today and charge a subscription to major credit cards.***

***Send your check, money order or credit card information (including expiration date) to:***

**The BARNES REVIEW**  
P.O. Box 15877  
Washington, D.C. 20003

***Check us out at [barnesreview.org](http://barnesreview.org) or [barnesreview.com](http://barnesreview.com)***



**TBR ORDERING COUPON** TBR subscribers take 10% off book prices

Item#	Description/Title	Qty	Cost Ea.	Total
SUBTOTAL				
Add S&H on books*				
Send me a 1-year subscription to TBR for \$46**				
Send me a 2-year subscription to TBR for \$78**				
TOTAL				

**\*S&H ON BOOKS:** Add \$5 S&H on orders up to \$50. Add \$10 S&H on orders from \$50.01 to \$100. Add \$15 S&H on orders over \$100. Outside the U.S. double these S&H charges.

**\*\*TBR SUBSCRIPTION PRICES: U.S.A:** \$46 one year; \$78 two years. **Canada/Mexico:** \$65 per year. **All Other Nations:** \$80 per year delivered via air mail.

**PAYMENT OPTIONS:** ☐ CHECK/MO ☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX ☐ DISCOVER

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**CUSTOMER INFORMATION:**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

City/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN WITH PAYMENT TO:** THE BARNES REVIEW, P.O. Box 15877, Washington, D.C. 20003. Call 1-877-773-9077 toll free to charge to major credit cards.

**BWW110**



**"Truth is always the first war casualty."**

**—Harry Elmer Barnes**

# Who Started WWI?

**World War One:** It was the very first of the devastating modern wars, involving nations from across the globe and resulting in millions of casualties—both civilians and combat soldiers. But most of what we think we know about the war may be wrong, according to Professor Harry Elmer Barnes—known as the father of historical Revisionism. Inside these pages you'll read his analysis of the real causes of the "War to End All Wars," and follow along as he brings "history into accord with the facts."

**PRICE:** One copy is \$6; 2-5 copies are \$5 each; 6-9 copies are \$4.50 each; 10-49 copies are \$4 each; 50-99 copies are \$3.50 each; 100 or more just \$3 each. Copies of this booklet can be ordered from TBR, P.O. Box 15877, Washington, D.C. 20003. Call 1-877-773-9077 toll free and charge to major credit cards. Add S&H inside U.S. One booklet add \$3. More than one booklet add: \$5 S&H up to \$50; \$10 from \$50.01 to \$100; \$15 S&H on orders over \$100. Outside U.S. email [TBRca@aol.com](mailto:TBRca@aol.com) for S&H to your nation. See [www.BarnesReview.com](http://www.BarnesReview.com).